

Riverside General Plan Program

Education Subcommittee Meeting Thursday, September 4, 2003

On Thursday, September 4, 2003, City of Riverside Planning staff and the General Plan consultant team led by Cotton/Bridges/Associates and MIG held a second meeting with the Education Subcommittee. Invitees included representatives from the Riverside Unified School District, Alvord Unified School District, Riverside City College, UC Riverside, California Baptist University, La Sierra University, and the County Office of Education. Persons attending represented AUSD, RUSD, La Sierra University, Cal Baptist, RCC, and the Office of Education. The UCR representative called to indicate interest in the meeting but identified a scheduling conflict.

The consultant team presented the draft Objectives, Policies, and Tools to be included in the Education Element of the General Plan. Participants were asked to identify any additional issues that were important to include in the Element. The participants offered the following comments.

Alvord Unified School District

- Paul Jessup of AUSD made the statement: "Schools are a reflection of what a community aspires to be." This concept needs to be integral to the entire planning effort.
- The District is concerned about the lack of physical infrastructure within its service area. Sidewalks and traffic signal improvements are needed now around existing schools to allow children to get to school safely. Generally, such improvements are needed within a one-mile service area of an elementary, since no busing occurs within this radius. Bicycle lanes are also needed.
- Public safety is of critical concern. The school resource officer (SRO) program at the schools is an extraordinarily valuable resource that should not be lost. The SROs help in the surrounding neighborhoods and can act as a deterrent to crime. They help solve problems at the front end and prevent future problems. The City must make a strong commitment to keeping and enhancing this program. (RUSD strongly supported these statements.)
- The Police Department is considered paring back the crossing guard program, stating that guards at several locations are "not warranted" based on established criteria. The criteria need to be reexamined to ensure definitions have parent support.

La Sierra University

- Finding affordable housing is a challenge for new professors/staff at the LSU, particularly single-family housing. More homes in the \$200,000-250,000 range are needed.
- LSU would like to be able to provide more housing on campus.
- LSU students and staff would benefit from a development like University Village (near UCR) in the La Sierra area. Cal Baptist would as well.
- LSU is looking to make its on-campus recreational facilities open to the general public for use. These are the types of partnerships that benefit the city.
- The General Plan should include policies aimed toward including the community in campus events, especially cultural events.

Comments Objectives, Policies, and Tools

- Add a policy that addresses the need for coordination in the project approval process regarding the placement and timing of school construction.
- Regarding joint-use arrangements, make sure the Plan addresses the need for the City to fund the operation of facilities, not just the construction.
- The policies associated with the third objective appear out of place.
- Add a policy or tool to put in place a citywide inventory of all work-force development programs and partnerships now in place.
- Address joint use of resources (other than facilities).
- Add a policy focused on retaining persons educated in Riverside as workers in Riverside. Possible tools include:
 - a. Facilitating extended internship opportunities with businesses in Riverside
 - b. Providing affordable housing
 - c. Typing work force development in the schools, colleges, and universities to the City's economic development goals
- Address desired programs that use technology to tie educational institutions together for instruction. Cooperation is essential. An example given was RUSD's desire to install a fiber optic network and the need to work with the City's Public Utilities Department to facilitate this. RUSD is considering partnering with Riverside County to share costs.
- Include programs that support life-long learning.

Other Comments

- Map the community's safety resources (e.g. City Police, campus police) to ensure that no unnecessary overlap occurs (e.g. around RCC).
- The City and educational institutions need to work together to heighten the community's awareness of available educational resources. Examples of outreach could include the City's Public Information office and the Office of Neighborhoods.

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